

THREEPENCE



EVERY FRIDAY

EAGLE

MAY 1950 No. 4

DAN DARE

PILOT OF THE FUTURE



IN THE REMOTE WASTES OF SPACE DRIFTS THE WRECK OF THE "KINGFISHER" BLOWN APART IN THE LATEST ATTEMPT TO REACH VENUS, THE MYSTERY PLANET.

BACK ON THE EARTH, SIR HUBBERT, GUEST CONTROLLER OF THE SPACE FLEET, AND DAN DARE, CHIEF PILOT, ARE JOINING IN A HELICOPTER TO AN EMERGENCY CABINET MEETING....

I'VE GOT A THEORY, SIR!

WELL, LET'S HAVE IT, DAN—ONLY IT HAD BETTER BE GOOD!

RIGHT—KINGFISHER WAS POWERED WITH IMPULSE WAVE ENGINES, WASN'T SHE?

OF COURSE SHE WAS, DAN—LIKE EVERY SPACE SHIP FOR THE LAST FIFTEEN YEARS.

YOU MEAN YOU KNOW WHAT MADE THE SHIPS FLY UP?

THE IMPULSE WAVES ARE BROADCAST INTO SPACE FROM STATIONS ON THE EARTH, MOON AND MARS PICKED UP BY THE SHIPS AND STORED IN IMPULSE CYLINDERS LIKE A BATTERY STORES ELECTRICITY. THEN THE WAVES ARE FED TO THE ENGINES AS REQUIRED—IT SAVES CARRYING TONS OF FUEL—RIGHT?

SPACE SHIPS PICK UP IMPULSE WAVES

YES, DAN AND C-A-T SPELLS CAT. WHAT'S THE POINT OF THIS ELEMENTARY LESSON?

WELL, ALL THREE SHIPS THE ORION "ARGONAUT" AND "KINGFISHER" WENT WEST AT THE SAME DISTANCE FROM VENUS

YES—WE KNOW THAT BUT....

AND IF YOU REMEMBER WHAT THAT CREWMAN SHOUTED IN THE "KINGFISHER" JUST BEFORE SHE BLEW UP?

HE SAID "IT'S IN THE IMPULSE CYLINDERS"

WELL, WHAT OF IT?

DON'T YOU SEE? THERE MUST BE A SHIELD AROUND VENUS

A SHIELD?

YES, A SHIELD—SOME KIND OF RAY WHICH IS HOSTILE TO OUR IMPULSE WAVES!

I SUPPOSE THERE COULD BE.....

CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN A SHIP HIT THE SHIELD, CARRYING A HUGE LOAD OF IMPULSE WAVES IN ITS CYLINDERS?

YES, BY GEORGE!—JUST WHAT DID HAPPEN TO KINGFISHER

IF WE RESURRECT ONE OF THE OLD ROCKET SHIPS, CARRYING ITS OWN FUEL, AND WITHOUT ANY IMPULSE WAVE MECHANISM (I'LL BET TEN TO ONE IT GETS THROUGH!)

UH, IT'S A CHANCE ANYWAY, AND ANY CHANCE IS WORTH TRYING. WE'LL DO IT, DAN!

BUT WE'LL BUILD NEW ROCKET SHIPS FOR THE JOB

RIGHT, SIR—AND AFTER THAT BRAIN STORM I DON'T THINK YOU CAN STOP ME GOING ON THE NEXT TRIP TO VENUS!

STOP YOU?—NO, DAN, I'M NOT GOING TO STOP YOU! I CUT MY TEETH ON ROCKET SHIPS BEFORE YOU WERE BORN—I'M COMING WITH YOU!

AND SO, AT BREAKNECK SPEED, PLANS ARE RUSHED AHEAD FOR A NEW ATTEMPT TO REACH VENUS USING ROCKET SHIPS TO GO THROUGH THE DANGER ZONE.....

WELL, THERE'S THE FIRST ONE, SIR HUBERT—THREE MONTHS FROM DRAWING BOARD TO FINISHED SHIP & YOU'VE HALF KILLED THE CONSTRUCTION BRANCH

DO EM GOODBYE TIME THEY DID SOME WORK, WHAT D'YOU THINK OF HER, DAN?

ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT, SIR—LET'S TAKE HER UP.

BE CAREFUL, DAN—SHE'S HAD NO ROUTING TESTS YET!

WE'LL TAKE A CHANCE

CONTINUED

The Adventures of P.C.49

FROM THE FAMOUS RADIO
series by ALAN STRANKS

WHILE P.C. 49
IS AT HOSPITAL
LISTENING TO
JIMMY'S STORY,
JOAN IS AT
COFFEE DAN'S
ANXIOUSLY
AWAITING NEWS



MEANWHILE AT THE HOSPITAL

I LOOKED UP JUST BEFORE THE CAR HIT ME. THE MAN BESIDE THE DRIVER HAD HIS HAND UP AGAINST THE WINDSCREEN AS IF TO WARD OFF THE SHOCK.



CONTINUED

PILOT AGAINST THE WORLD

by Chad Varab

The story so far

Ray, a former night-fighter pilot and now a member of a mysterious international outfit "The Pansectors," is going to visit a contact from a gang which trades and sells atomic secrets. Jim Ray's contact, found the contact in the office of a hounded house. And, indeed, Ray, with his sister Pete and Dick Barstow of the Ace Garage, go to fetch the contact but find the latter empty, and Pete is kidnapped by the gang.

Then Ray and Dick go to a house where the gangsters are using a radio tower and find Pete lying on the road as he ran over. They take her to the Doctor and wait police and deliver the gangsters back to the hounded house. They are Jim, who has found a time bomb placed by the gang, racing towards the house. There is a terrific explosion. The gangsters' car is blown to bits and the fire spreads to the nearby hounded house.

Chapter 4

The secret of the cellar

FOR a moment Dick and Ray lay stunned. Then, as the two policemen rushed forward, they staggered to their feet, and Dick grabbed the fire-extinguisher from the unconscious Jaguar.

Ray snatched it from him, yelling, "Go get the fire brigade!" and ran as fast as he could across the rubbish-strewn ground towards the burning wreck.

"Two of ours, if they had Ken in the car, and three or four of theirs," growled Ray, as he leapt over a pile of rubble and reached the road. "How long will it be before we put a stop to it?"

One of the policemen had managed to get the extinguisher from the wrecked car, burning his hands in the process, and he and Ray tackled the blaze from opposite sides while the other policeman tried to pull the bodies clear. Ray kept his eyes on the job; he would look for Jim and Ken when the fire was out. "Your pal goes for the fire-engine!" shouted the cat who was holding the hot extinguisher firmly in his blistered hands.

"Yes. We may get this order, but we can't save the house!"

"They don't matter—they're due for demolition anyway," called the policeman.

Ray didn't answer. The gangsters had gone to such lengths to keep people away from their hide-out that he felt certain there was something important there. He didn't want whatever it was to be destroyed by the fire. It suddenly occurred to him that perhaps the house with the cellar wasn't empty after all, he tried the atomic scientist's rubble. Have been moved from the cellar to the house itself. Leaving the two policemen to their glibly task amongst the charred and smoking wreckage of the car, he sprang at the door of the house, wrenched at the knob, and plunged through into the smoke-filled passage.

Strongly enough, the fire in the house had started in the upper story, but it was rapidly spreading downwards. He shouted, "Ted,

Ted!" but there was no response, and he leaped into a fit of coughing.

He dropped to his knees and pressed his cheek against the floor, gratefully breathing the clean current of air he knew he would find there. Then he began to climb the stairs on hands and knees, keeping his head low and banging it on each step.

As he reached the top, showers of plaster fell on him from the ceiling.

He went to each room in turn, hugging at the back of the house, but found no one. A bluing beam came crashing down from the roof, accompanied by a bit of broken tile and more plaster. The beam just missed him, and he managed to push it aside with his foot and edge past it. He reached the front room and there a whole tangled mass of burning timber fell into the well of the stairs and blocked his retreat.

He could hear regular heavy thuds from below, and knew that the policemen would search the rest of the downstairs rooms. He felt the door against the flames, and made his way to the window. The ceiling of the room was already beginning to bulge.

The explosion had loosened the boards with which the window-opening had been nailed up, but they had been put on from the inside and it was difficult to tear them away.

He had made an opening big enough to get his head and shoulders through when the ceiling came down with a crash. At the same moment he heard the nearest staircase that had ever fallen upon his ears—the clanging of the bell on the fire-engine.

He leaped out of the window, gulping in deep breaths of the clean air of early dawn, and kicking backwards like a mule to try to keep the burning debris from him. The fire-engine screamed to a stop below the window, and a fireman was running steadily up a ladder while it was still being extended towards the window. He felt himself dragged out by strong and skilled hands and a few seconds later he was lying on the road.

He turned his head towards the house he had left. Flames were already playing on it with a great hissing and splashing. The firemen would probably use the ground floor, or part of it. Then he looked along the street and sat up with a jerk. The example crew was lifted up, and out of the hole popped a scalded head. It was Jim.

Two men ran forward and pulled the boy out. He came running to Ray, who stood up shakily and put his arms round him.

"I thought you were dead, honey," he said cheerfully.

"Now you know what it feels like," murmured Jim, sniffing back a few tears. "For two years I thought we were dead. It was awful. He kept his nose on the back of his hand, and he lip trembled."

"I'm sorry, old chap," said Ray. "I ought to have told you I didn't realize it would be so hard when I let it be thought I was dead."

Jim turned away. "It was bad for me, what do you think it was like for Aunt Em? It broke her heart when you were reported dead, Ray. It was that that killed her. How could you let her die without knowing? I don't care how important."

"I didn't," said Ray quietly. "She knew all the time. That's why she wouldn't sign to a Memorial Service for me. And it wasn't a broken heart my mother died of. It was cancer. That's another devilish thing our claps are going to beat—perhaps before we've beaten war."

Jim goggled at him. "You mean Aunt Em knew? She had it gilly well. Mind you, everybody said she was wonderfully calm, but we never suspected that you. Did she tell my Mum?"

"Not until she was dying herself!" Jim said looked troubled.

"All the same," he murmured, "she had the right to see you when she was so ill. It wasn't fair to—"

"I saw her whenever I was in England," interrupted Ray, "and I went with her an hour before she died."

"What was she wearing?"

"A blue dress."

"I saw her that day, too. What was she wearing?"

"Oh!" Ray's eyes narrowed. "So you're testing me, are you? I thought you said you trusted me!"

Jim stuck out his lip obstinately and kicked at the ground, hanging his head.

A man in a tuxedo suit and gray hair came up and touched him on the shoulder.

"I want a word with you, young," he said, "I'm a police officer. I have reason to believe that you know something about this explosion. Would you care to tell me about it?"

"Are you arresting me?" asked Jim fearfully.

"Not at the moment. You're not bound to make any statement, but—"

"I'd rather not say anything, then."

"In that case, I must ask you to come along with me to the Police Station."

"All right," whispered Jim.

May I say a word, officer?" asked Ray diffidently.

"Certainly."

"I'm sure you haven't done anything wrong, Jim, and if you know anything about the explosion I think you should tell the police."

"You do, do you?" Jim still wouldn't look at Ray.

"You remember what your Aunt Em said to you the day she died?"

Jim jerked his head up, and his eyes searched his cousin's face.

"Yes," he said. "Remember."

"She said, 'Be a good lad, Jim, and do your duty however hard it may be, then you'll have nothing to fear.' She was wearing the bed-jacket your mother lent her."

The smile faded from Jim's face, and he returned Ray's smile. Then he turned to the plain clothes man.

"I'll tell you, sir," he said. "I was sleeping at Ken's house, and he was downstairs on the settee, or so I thought. I woke up in the night and went down to find Ken, but he wasn't there, and there was a staircase where he



"Well, it would have been it was ticking, and there was a loop of wire hanging out, and then I thought it was a time-bomb!"

"Had you any reason to think anyone would want to blow their house up?"

"Jim was conscious without looking at him that Ray was hanging on his reply."

"I never imagined anyone could be so wicked as to kill innocent people like that," he said truthfully. "Anyway, I thought it was a bomb, and it seems I was right. I picked it up and ran out of the house, meaning to dump it over there" (he pointed to the middle of the beach-void) "where it would do no harm. But I came into a policeman—"

"You know about that," put in the officer. "Why didn't you let him deal with it?"

"I told him what it was!"

"But you didn't mean him to believe you, did you?"

"No, sir," admitted Jim. "Well, it wasn't a very nice thing to wish anyone was it?"

"It was his duty to 'hold the baby,' not yours."

"Well, I thought it was mine, as I'd found it, so I was away."

Ray and the policeman exchanged glances. "You didn't give the man any more of a medal or a good hand, young fellow-sir," said the officer. "But where did you get to after he chased you?"

"I tripped up and knocked myself out," answered Jim, rubbing his head ruefully. "I don't know how long I lay there, but when I came round the thing was ticking in my ear. I wasn't half scared, I can tell you."

"So would I have been," said Ray.

"So I probed it again, and ran on, and was just going to cross the road then." (He pointed at the place) "When a grey car nearly knocked me down. Again I was going to cross, when another car came the opposite way and tried to run me first. It stopped where it is now—"

"or what is it?" said a man with a gun pointed at it.

"How many men were in the car?" snapped the detective.

"Three, I think. I've not seen."

"No one you knew?" asked Ray. He spoke casually, but slowly and distinctly.

"Jim shook his head, and Ray let out his breath."

"The man saw me and I thought he was going to shoot. I dropped the suitcase and tried not to cross the road then and got down the hill. I'd just got the cover back when there was a terrific explosion, and the whole place shook. I fell right down into the cellar, and as I heard it sound like—like flames, and with burning, I stayed where I was. There was a door at the top of the cellar steps, but it was still locked."

"Self?" queried the policeman.

"The explosion hadn't been at open," explained Jim hurriedly. "Then when everything seemed quiet—I'd heard the fire-engine I came out, and here I am."

"So I see," commented the detective dryly. "Well, you've had a lucky escape, young man. I shall want to ask you a few more questions yet, but you ought to be in bed after the night you've had. If I let Rawlings take you home, will you promise not to try to avoid me?"

"Yes, sir."

Neither Ray nor Jim had noticed Dick, leaving patiently against the Jaguar, and brooding morosely over the wreck of the Mooring. The detective called Dick over, Jim answered to Ray. "Two-way car-bay."

The detective turned.

"What did you say?" he asked.

"I went to stay," and Jim.

"Stay, but you're coming 'at' me," stated Dick. "We don't want you. My worried, now do you?"

As Jim climbed into the Jaguar, Ray called out.

"You won't be needing me for a bit, will you, Dick?"

Dick took the hint.

"No. Get yourself somewhat 'at' rest, then you can come round my 'fishy' you discombobulate' job."

The Jaguar drove off.

"I'll sit you and Rawlings together, later," and the plain clothes man. "Meanwhile, thanks for picking up our chips."

"That's the one that was injured?" asked Ray.

"He'll be all right. All in a night's work. Squally lad, that policeman. You know him, don't you?"

"He happens to be my cousin."

"What? Strange coincidence."

"Yes, isn't it?"

The policeman wandered off to give some instructions about the corpse. Other policemen were turning away rubber-necks who had been attracted to the scene even at that early hour of the morning. Fifteen men were clambering over the ruins of the houses, previously damaged by German bombs, chopping out, smoldering timber with their hatchets and searching amongst the debris.

RAY moved nonchalantly towards the rubble. The cover was still off. Waiting his opportunity, he stalk unobserved down the chest, and scrambled as quietly as he could down the hoop of coal and into the better cellar.

"Two-way car-bay," Jim had said. Well, here was the two-way. What had the boy discovered whilst he waited here after the explosion? He'd got plenty of gas, to go prowling around with the house burning above his head, anyway!

The boys were actually stone chisels or compasses back against the wall. There were an upper and a lower row, eight in all, each about a cubic yard in size. As Ray flicked on his lighter he could see the one as which he feared Ted, the atomic account,

had been stuffed, for the dum is a real war it had been stuffed.

He knelt down and passed into the bin. There seemed to be some smudges on the left-hand side. He squatted in the bin and scrutinized them closely. The marks were very distinct—of Ted had been laid up he may have had to make them with his nose (and Ray's own nose twitched in sympathy as he saw the roughness of the surface).

Ted had left a message!

Ray held the little flame of his lighter as close as he could, and with difficulty made out the badly-faded letters. The message said: THE LONG IS I OF THEM NO MA EI

What on earth could it mean? "LONG" must be a mistake for "LOVE", but if "I" was short for "ONE", it didn't make sense. Ted would never suggest that the Long was on the side of that gang of crooks they were working against! Unless he meant some person who had the role "LONG"?

And who was "NO MA EI"? "Sounded Chinese."

Must be some sort of a code, decided Ray. He was in no state to cope with such puzzles, so he memorized the message carefully and prepared to leave the cellar.



Then something occurred to him. That message couldn't have been the thing the gang was so anxious to hide! If they'd found it they would have robbed it off! There must be something else.

The gangsters had been prepared to kill anyone who might possibly know that they were using this cellar. They had shot at Jim and tried to kill him with a knife. They had tried to blow him up, and anyone he might have spoken to, with a time-bomb. They had kidnapped Pex and put her where she

would undoubtedly have been seen once and killed, but for Dick's accident. Hanson knew what they had done to Kim. As for himself, they had tried at the risk of their own lives to run the Agony in which he and Dick were clashing there, and they'd done everything as they power to throw off pursuit before returning to this cellar.

All because of a message they could have robbed off in two ticks? Not likely!

He would have to go and ask Jim what it was that he had found. He hoped he could get to Jim's house without being stopped.

He sat for a moment on the nearest shelf. It gave a start.

His heart bounding, he leapt off, and pressed on at a hard waltz his hands. Again he moved, and as the foot of the heavy fire went down, the back went up by the amount. It was proved as the middle!

Quickly he tried the other shelves. None of them budged an inch.

He returned to the one that moved. It took him some time to realize what was the point of it. Then, squinting on his branches and gullwing the slab whilst feeling the back wall of the bin with his other hand, he found the answer.

The fireplace which formed the back of the bin was also pivoted, but wouldn't move unless the other was first swung clear of the top of it. After a struggle he managed to pull the vertical flap into a horizontal position. A jagged line on the stomach he illuminated the opening with his lighter.

At the back of the cavity was a strong wooden box, so wide that it was obvious it would only just go through the opening. He tried to get his fingers underneath it, but it was too heavy to lift.

Lead! He knew one important use of lead! He felt as certain as if he'd seen inside it that this was a box, lined with lead and containing some radioactive or fissionable material! By gosh, that'd be coming back for this all right!

But the ones who'd been in the car, he thought greedily, but others of the gang. Well, they wouldn't find it here.

He crawled forward and thrust his arm into the cavity, trying to get a grip on the back of the box. He heaved and heaved in the effort to move it, but in vain. In the course of his struggle he arched his back, and before he knew what was happening the stone swung into place again and trapped his arm.

The pain was agonizing, and he let out an involuntary yell. Then, realizing that he was jammed in such a position that he couldn't relax himself, he yelled on purpose.

The only answer he got was the muffled clanging of a bell as the fire-engine drove away. Not so long ago that same siren had seemed to him like sweet music. Now it was more like a knife. He was trapped!

(To be continued next week)

CAPTAIN PUGWASH

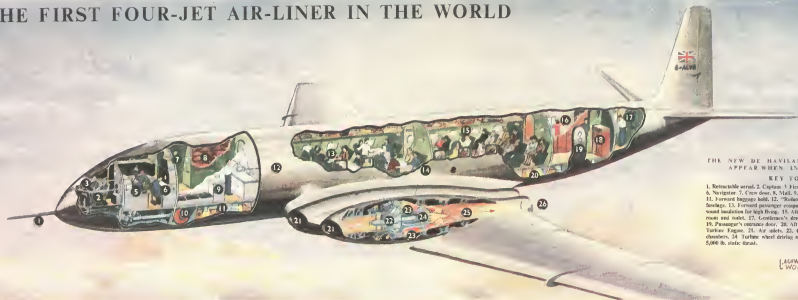


SETH AND SHORTY - COWBOYS

A captured Redskin has told of a "Mystery Man" leading the Indians and planning to drive out the Rangers



THE FIRST FOUR-JET AIR-LINER IN THE WORLD



THE NEW DE HAVILLAND "COMET" AS IT MIGHT APPEAR WHEN IN PASSENGER SERVICE

KEY TO NUMBERS

1. Retractable aerial, 2. Captain's seat, 3. First officer's seat, 4. Radio operator's seat, 5. Flight engineer's seat, 6. Navigator's seat, 7. Crew door, 8. Mail, 9. Kitchen, 10. New landing wheels (retracted), 11. Forward baggage hold, 12. 'Staircase' (access to rear hold), 13. Forward passenger compartment, 14. Double door for emergency exit, 15. Air passenger compartment, 16. Ladies' dressing room and toilet, 17. Gentlemen's dressing room and toilet, 18. Wardrobe room, 19. Passenger's entrance door, 20. Air baggage hold, 21. 'Hatch' (access to baggage hold), 22. Air intake, 23. Compressor, 24. Compressor chambers, 25. Turbine wheel driving air compressor, 26. Jet pipes, 27. Jet nozzles, 28. Jet engines.

LAWRENCE WOOD

SKIPPY THE KANGAROO

BY DANET, DUBRISAY, GENÈSTRE

AN ANDRÉ SARRUT PRODUCTION



HEROES OF THE CLOUDS



I'M SORRY, CHICK, NICHOLSON HAS ALREADY MET EAD WHO HAS DESCRIBED THE PAUL BAILEY FLIGHTS. YOU NEED BE GIVING ME A PREVIEW OF THE LATEST JET-FIGHTER, WHICH I'M ABOUT TO TAKE UP ON A TEST FLIGHT FOR THE FIRST TIME. WHEN SHE IS!

Presenting the 'PHANTOM'

IF SHE LIVES UP TO OUR EXPECTATIONS, DICKENS WILL LEAD THE WORLD IN THE DESIGN OF A JET-POWERED FIGHTER AIRCRAFT.



DICK HAS A LAST-MINUTE CHAT WITH THE DESIGNER AFTER MONTHS OF WORK, AND TALKING THINGS. THE 'PHANTOM' IS TOWED OUT FOR ITS FIRST FLIGHT.

HERE IS A VIEW OF THE 'PHANTOM' OUT ON THE RAMP. JUST BEFORE TAKING OFF, NOTICE THE SWIFT-BACK WINGS AND THE SURFACE AND THE STABILIZING LONG-ARM PULSARS ON THE WING-TIPS. THE MAIN TANKS BEHIND THE COCKPIT ARE GUARDED BY TWO LADDER-PASSAGE OVER THE ENGINE.



The Ejection Seat

Just in Case!
THE 'PHANTOM' IS EQUIPPED WITH THE LATEST-TYPE EJECTION SEAT WHICH WILL SHOOT DICK OUT OF THE COCKPIT IN THE CASE OF AN EMERGENCY.



THE 'PHANTOM' IS A FAIRLY BIG AIRCRAFT, AND QUITE HEAVY AS FIGHTERS GO. SHE IS AN INTERCEPTOR, BUT HAS BEEN DESIGNED FOR LONG-RANGE BOMBARDMENT WORK. SHE IS ALSO SUITABLE FOR LIGHT BOMBING. IN THIS ROLE, THE FOUR CANNONS IN THE WINGS CAN BE REMOVED AND BOMBS CARRIED ON RACKS INSTEAD WHILE STILL LEAVING SUFFICIENT ARMAMENT TO ALLOW HER TO TAKE CARE OF HERSELF. HERE SHE IS BEING FUELLED. TOP RIGHT IS THE CRANE SERVICE, AND ON THE LEFT THE TRACTOR USED FOR TOWING THE 'PHANTOM' AWAY BACK TO THE HANGAR.

DICK SITS TENSED UP IN THE COCKPIT OF THE 'PHANTOM' READY FOR THE TAKE-OFF. OVER YEARS OF RESEARCH WILL DEPEND ON HIM DURING THE NEXT HOUR. DON'T MISS NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE WHEN... CAPT NICHOLSON WILL DESCRIBE THE FIRST AIRSHIP FLIGHT!



DISCOVERING THE COUNTRYSIDE

by John Dyke

The Puffin



DOES JUST LOOK AT ALL THOSE PUFFINS. ARE THEY WHAT A SOUND BENT?

I COULD WATCH THEM ALL DAY - THEY'RE PACKING THEM HERE AND THEY'RE NOT AT ALL BRIGHTENED OR HAPPY BEINGS. MANY OF THEM WILL BE SITTING ON THE SAND NOW AND THE OTHERS STANDING ARE ON GUARD OUTSIDE THEIR BURROWS.



BUT ARE THEY REAL BURROWS? YES, THEY ARE ANIMALS. MANY OF THEM ARE BUILT IN A FEW HOURS AND WHEN THE PUFFINS FIRST ARRIVED HERE FOR THE BREEDING SEASON, THE ROCKS WERE HERE BOUNDED OUT OF THEIR HOMES. THOSE PUFFINS WHO DON'T MANAGE TO TURN OUT A BURROW MADE A BURROW FOR THEMSELVES.



PUFFINS SPEND THE WINTER ON THE COAST, EATING THE WORMS IN LARGE BATCHES. THEY RETURN TO THEIR BREEDING PLACES IN LATE MARCH OR EARLY APRIL. ONE EGG IS Laid IN EACH BURROW.



AFTER HATCHING THE CHICK STAYS IN THE DARKNESS OF THE BURROW AND EATS AN ENDLESS AMOUNT OF SMALL FISH CALLED IN BY THE PARENTS. NEWLY HATCHED BIRDS DO NOT TRAVEL AFTER A FOURTH OF TWO OR THE PRESENT LINE INTEREST AND THE CHICK LEFT IN THE BURROW UNTIL IT CAN GET OUT AND FIND FOR ITSELF.



THEN THE ADULT BIRD MOULTS AND THE BRIGHT COLOURING OF THE BACK FLIES AWAY IN A WEEK OR SO. THE PUFFIN FEELS THE CALL OF THE SEA AGAIN - THERE IS A HARD FLIGHT ABOVE THE BREEDING GROUND BEFORE DEPARTURE AND BY EARLY AUGUST THERE ARE NO MORE PUFFINS ON THE CLIFFS.

Lash Lonergan's Quest

By MOORE RAYMOND

The story in far

Lash Lonergan, Australia's champion cragfisher and cowboy ropers, is on his way home to Coolah Creek, a far-southern cattle station owned by his grandfather, Lash. First, accompanied by Horatio O'Malley, his loyal assistant hunter, and Squab, a boy whom they rescued from the cruel owner of a Sydney saloon.

On the way home, Lash is followed by Horatio, a friendly aborigine, that his Uncle has been found dead on the bank with a piece of gold in his hand. Meanwhile the owner of Coolah Creek Station, crooked Chase Moore, has taken the place over, claiming that Uncle Peter made him his heir.

Knowing that his uncle left the property on his will, Lash rules to the nearby settlement of Yerracoona to see the bank manager, Mr. Peter. An aborigine takes the township to Yerracoona. The bank is on fire, and the gold is being taken to the station. But by a coincidence, Horatio's brother-in-law is in the bank and he is able to get the gold out of the bank.

On the way home, Lash is followed by Horatio, a friendly aborigine, that his Uncle has been found dead on the bank with a piece of gold in his hand. Meanwhile the owner of Coolah Creek Station, crooked Chase Moore, has taken the place over, claiming that Uncle Peter made him his heir.

Chapter 4

YES—Monsieur! I'll be back-jumping tomorrow—of my life's last effort," agreed Lash. "So the first thing you do with that gun you preched from Grimesy Joe is to shoot a possum."

"Too right," agreed Rawhide, laughing the rifle. "It's a beautiful bit of snappiness, isn't it?" The Irishman turned to Squab and said "You're one with that gun you preched from Grimesy Joe is to shoot a possum."

Lash grinned at the boy and explained "It's the hot Irish temper I'm afraid of, his might start acting like Grimesy Joe, and then you'll get a bullet into somebody. That wouldn't be polite. And I don't want any friend of mine to be impish. So tomorrow, when he meets Grimesy Joe at Oronowledge, he's going to give him his gun."

Rawhide's grin was cut short by their arrival at the big waterhole. He helped Lash to dismount and unroll his blankets underneath a coolah tree.

While Squab made a fire, Rawhide went off in search of a possum. As the place looked more numerous in the distance, he soon shot a possum, and then showed the carcass into a hollow of water that was put on to boil.

"I won't I had a gun," sighed Squab, as he eyed the rifle leaning against the tree.

"You deserve one," remarked Lash, "for saving the situation with that one egg. Maybe I'll buy you a twenty-two as a reward when I get some dough. But first of all you'll have to learn how to handle a rifle."

"Well, I reckon —" began Squab.

"I reckon you're hungry," bellowed Rawhide. All three burst into laughter.

"We're going to have a feast in honor of young Squab," announced Lash. "There's cragfish in the waterhole. And there's kangaroo not far away. I'll bet."

"And," pointed out Rawhide, "there's galah gawwies in that tree just past that Gullied gully. Oh, the taste of it! Squab, hand me that gun."

The boy picked up the rifle, jerked it to his shoulder, and fired. A galah tumbled from a branch of the bluegum tree as the rust took flight.

Before the astonished eyes of Lash and Rawhide, the bird fell again — this time at a bird on the wing. The galah somersaulted in the air and dropped like a stone.

"So sorry I didn't have time to get one more," said Squab breathlessly.

"The crook!" cried Rawhide.



"Of course," agreed Lash. "For a jolly I forgot you used to be in a circus."

"My uncle taught me sheep-shearing," growled Squab. As if to provide him with another target for demonstration two bridges flew over, with outstretched necks and slender, trailing legs.

The boy aimed the gun and pulled the trigger. Click! "It's empty," he said ruefully. "Now you've gone and used up all our ammunition," said Lash. "No kangaroo-tail soup tonight for me, I'm afraid. But I don't really mind, because I'm always nervous with both the hairy Irishman and a loaded gun about."

Rawhide chuckled and frumbled in his pocket. "I took the liberty of extracting the rest of Grimesy Joe's ammunition before he knew his goodbyes." He handed out a handful and refilled them on the ground.

Lash laughed and said: "Now do get. And don't come back without a kangaroo-tail, all skinned and ready for the pot."

Now the grouse had looked long and thin. He glared on the surface of the water. Lash accepted it off with a spoon and put it in a tin mug.

"Gee-ow, oh," he explained to the boy. "It's an old abo come for all sorts of aches and sprains. Bushmen smear by it, and they say it will even protect you! Well, I know it does wonders for sprains like mine, so we're going to take some managing my knee till I can use it properly again."

By the time Rawhide returned with the slowly boiling much better. After chipping up the tail and putting it on to cook, the Irishman took a turn at massage. Lash declared that the oil was making a tremendous cure.

"Let the fat be prepared!" he cried gaily as he got to his feet and walked across to the bluegum with hardly a limp. Selecting one of the many long, black hairs in his horse's beautiful tail, he swiftly pulled it out.

"That's your cragfish line," he said, handing the hair to Squab.

"Eh?" said the puzzled boy.

"There's sure to be cragfish in the waterhole, so see that as a line and tie on a bit of the grouse carcass for bait."

"Well, I've caught blabber cragfish with a bit of meat and string," said the boy, "but hereafter — He eyed the black hair doubtfully."

"You're not going to catch sharks, are you?" said Rawhide. "And if you don't think there's much strength in the skin of a Monstrous tail, I'll prove it to you. I'll bet you a handkerchief of cragfish claws to a pair of galah's feathers that I can hold you down on the ground with one single haircut!"

Lash grinned at Rawhide's secret work. While leading him another hair from Monstrous's tail, obeying instructions, Squab lay down on his back.

"There's only one little criticism," added Rawhide. "You must not catch hold of my hands or the hair. Do you agree?"

"Too right, cobber," charged the boy cheekily.

"That's your cragfish line," he said, handing the hair to Squab.

"Eh?" said the puzzled boy.

"There's sure to be cragfish in the waterhole, so see that as a line and tie on a bit of the grouse carcass for bait."

"Well, I've caught blabber cragfish with a bit of meat and string," said the boy, "but hereafter — He eyed the black hair doubtfully."

"You're not going to catch sharks, are you?" said Rawhide. "And if you don't think there's much strength in the skin of a Monstrous tail, I'll prove it to you. I'll bet you a handkerchief of cragfish claws to a pair of galah's feathers that I can hold you down on the ground with one single haircut!"

Lash grinned at Rawhide's secret work. While leading him another hair from Monstrous's tail, obeying instructions, Squab lay down on his back.

"There's only one little criticism," added Rawhide. "You must not catch hold of my hands or the hair. Do you agree?"

"Too right, cobber," charged the boy cheekily.

Rawhide knelt beside Squab and placed the middle of the hair across the boy's nose about halfway down. With one end of the hair in either hand, he lowered them to the ground and placed them lightly beside the boy's ears, at the same time drawing the hair tight.

"Now get up," he warned.

Squab started to move his head. "Oh?" he yelled as the hairbit hit into the skin of his nose. The pain was so fierce that his eyes watered.

"Come on, my little skin," jeered Rawhide good naturedly.

Squab made another effort — and yelped. His eyes filled with unshed tears, while the hair, the tearing pain continued after he had given up the attempt, and he thought the hair was cutting his nose in two.

"That's your cragfish line," he said, handing the hair to Squab.

"Eh?" said the puzzled boy.

"There's sure to be cragfish in the waterhole, so see that as a line and tie on a bit of the grouse carcass for bait."

"Well, I've caught blabber cragfish with a bit of meat and string," said the boy, "but hereafter — He eyed the black hair doubtfully."

"You're not going to catch sharks, are you?" said Rawhide. "And if you don't think there's much strength in the skin of a Monstrous tail, I'll prove it to you. I'll bet you a handkerchief of cragfish claws to a pair of galah's feathers that I can hold you down on the ground with one single haircut!"

Lash grinned at Rawhide's secret work. While leading him another hair from Monstrous's tail, obeying instructions, Squab lay down on his back.

"There's only one little criticism," added Rawhide. "You must not catch hold of my hands or the hair. Do you agree?"

"Too right, cobber," charged the boy cheekily.

Rawhide knelt beside Squab and placed the middle of the hair across the boy's nose about halfway down. With one end of the hair in either hand, he lowered them to the ground and placed them lightly beside the boy's ears, at the same time drawing the hair tight.

"Now get up," he warned.

Squab started to move his head. "Oh?" he yelled as the hairbit hit into the skin of his nose. The pain was so fierce that his eyes watered.

"Come on, my little skin," jeered Rawhide good naturedly.

Squab made another effort — and yelped. His eyes filled with unshed tears, while the hair, the tearing pain continued after he had given up the attempt, and he thought the hair was cutting his nose in two.

"I — I give up!" he gasped.

Rawhide whipped away the hair and handed the boy to his feet. "Now get on with your cragfish!" he ordered. "And don't forget you owe me a pair of galah's feathers!"

Following the boy's master of blood from his nose and ungrudging it with many eyes. Squab looked to disavow that Lash stepped him on the shoulder and chuckled. "Never mind, cobber. Every kid in the bush has that trick played on him sooner or later. Here's a line with some loss on it. Had out those cragfish."

Squab proved to be a more skilful cragfisher than the other two. Carefully hauling at the bait with the cragfish clinging to it, he waited till a whither broke the surface before grabbing at the chosen creature. He several once missed — while both Lash and Rawhide let several get away. Pressed by the orders for his skill, Squab soon recovered his high spirits.

It was a wonderful feast, in the cool of the evening, by the side of the waterhole where the possums and blabber and other birds came down to drink, the three hungry comrades ate one of the most delicious meals of their lives.

First came the cragfish, baked by the little, bright embers of a charcoalwood fire. Then the possum, grilled on embers held over the same fire.

Finally, the kangaroo-tail soup, so rich flavor merging with the taste of baked possum and a couple of the possum Kangaroos always carried in his bushbag.

It was all washed down with belly tea made over the open fire — the tea that all Australians declare is the best in the world.

The next over, they lounged in the purple dusk and yarned away the hours till the Southern Cross was burning high over the trees. It was an evening of such electrical conversation, combined with the happiness of true comradeship, that Lash Lonergan almost forgot the dates and dangers that awaited him on the morrow.

Lash, Rawhide and Squab were jingling along the road to Oronowledge when the Irishman said to the rougher:

"Of course, it's none of my business — and I wouldn't wish you to think I'm being impish — but I'm sure of course if you don't want to tell me you mean, but —"

"Not with it?" laughed Lash.

"Well, no-cogger!" boy, what's your plan for the future?"

"First, I'll go to work every cent I earn at the sports today. When Chase backed me yesterday, we put out of his plan to drive me out of this district!"

"I see what you mean," replied Rawhide. "He wants you to come a gutter today so the Champ of Champions will look ridiculous in a last season's sports meeting."

"Go to the top of the class," growled the rougher. "Dago wants to drive me away so that I won't hang around trying to get back the property that's rightly mine. He'll try every dirty trick in his collection. I'm warning with Dago and his meek, we're running grave risks. They'll use gun and knife and any other weapon, and they'll make the excuse it's self-defense."

"But how are you going to prove Coolah Creek Station belongs to you?" asked Squab.

"The will's gone."

"Uncle Peter's strength wasn't strong that let us found best open," replied Lash, "so The Hatchback may still have it. And that means the will might still be in existence. Why did he smash open and leave behind the other strongholds and not Uncle Peter's?"

"I don't know. But I'm going after their bush-ropes and I'm going to find out. Besides, there's the reward. Even if I don't find the will, I'll get the reward and have plenty of money to fight Dago tomorrow in court."

"The law?" asked Rawhide scornfully.

"I'll like to take the law into my own hands and squeeze the truth out of 'em."



Walls
ICE CREAM

Presents

TOMMY WALLS

The Wonder Boy



THE GREAT ADVENTURER

